

Eating Habits

Eating all the right foods is great, but it is important to also eat foods right. Proper eating habits can have a great impact on digestion, elimination and the nutritional impact of food.

Here are some ideas to consider:

- **Spend more time with your food.**

- » Preparing and cooking food is becoming a lost art in our fast paced world. You will better appreciate the foods you eat when you spend time preparing them
- » Digestion begins when we see and smell food. Saliva and gastric juices begin while preparing for the meal, before the first bite. Small appetizers can also be helpful before eating large meals.
- » Chew food thoroughly. The smaller the food particles and the more interaction with salivary enzymes, the better the digestion process will be.
- » Relax while eating. Reduce the number of times you eat while driving, working, etc.



- **Socialize around food**

- » In most cultures, eating with others is an important and regular social event that helps maintain the fabric of family life.
- » Eating alone often promotes poor food choices.
- » Eating with others allows for sharing the cost/time of preparing meals.

Eat regular meals

- » Breakfast is especially important because it helps set a balanced blood sugar foundation (glycemic control) throughout the day. If blood sugar is not properly balanced, it impacts the stress hormone cortisol. Too much cortisol can decrease the body's ability to deal with stress as well as decrease the ability of our immune system to fight off infections.
- » Eat healthy snacks throughout the day to maintain energy and healthy blood sugar balance.

Take Control of Your Dietary Choices

- Eat foods that would have been considered "food" 150 years ago. In other words, reduce the amount of processed foods consumed.
- Use the Mediterranean diet as the basis of your diet plan. If you are not familiar with the Mediterranean diet reference the book, "Eat, Drink and be Healthy," by Walter Willett.
- Decrease the Glycemic Impact of your diet by reducing high-glycemic-index foods, increasing fiber content and eliminating most processed sugars.
- Increase the amount of fresh, local and seasonal foods you consume.
- Increase the use of spices and foods with natural colors; these are typically antioxidant-rich and anti-inflammatory.
- Increase fiber consumption - both soluble and insoluble (this is critical for both glycemic control and G.I. regularity).

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